

# THE MESSENGER

## MEMBER NATION PARTNERS EDITION



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Issue #3

***“Be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom.”***

*Colossians 3:15b-16a ESV*

I’ve just returned from a global gathering of eight Literacy & Evangelism (L&E) Member Nation Partners. Our gathering was graciously hosted by L&E Ghana in their beautiful country in West Africa. As I listened to what God is doing in nations around the world, I was reminded of Jesus sending out his disciples. Upon their return, the gospel of Luke records Jesus saying, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven,” Luke 10:18 (NIV). It was so encouraging to hear of strongholds of illiteracy falling down through the work of L&E Member Nation Partners.

Our “Member Nation Partners” are Literacy & Evangelism organizations incorporated in a given country, organized to do literacy and/or ESL ministry, aligned with the mission of Literacy & Evangelism International (LEI). This represents a global network of L&E partners doing similar work around the world.

The genesis of the Member Nation Partners initiative began several years ago when the leadership of LEI began looking for “bright spots” of literacy work around the globe. Two countries came to the forefront, Alfabetização e Evangelização Internacional (AEI/LEI) in Brazil and Literacy & Evangelism Fellowship of Kenya (now called L&E Kenya). Both organizations embraced the mission, vision, and name of Literacy & Evangelism.

The book, *Drive, The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, by Daniel Pink, articulates three ultimate motivators: Autonomy, Mastery, and Purpose. Both AEI Brazil and L&E Kenya were given full autonomy in their efforts to engage literacy ministry in the context of their own culture. Both mastered the use of L&E materials. L&E Kenya even mastered the creation of L&E Bible-content primers. Both organizations fully embraced the higher purpose of using literacy to strengthen the Church and share the message of Christ through the gift of reading.

The question before the leadership team at LEI was, how do we facilitate the creation of more “bright spots”? How do we set aflame more nations/countries with autonomy, mastery and purpose, yoked together by the vision of LEI? What flowed out of these questions was a strategic initiative to put in place a process to encourage the formation of additional Member Nation Partners. Current Member Nation Partners include: L&E Benin/Togo, AEI Brazil, LEI Canada, L&E Kenya, L&E Ghana, L&E Malawi, L&E Nigeria, and LEI USA.

May God continue to bless the expanding network of L&E Member Nation Partners, of which we are honored to be one.

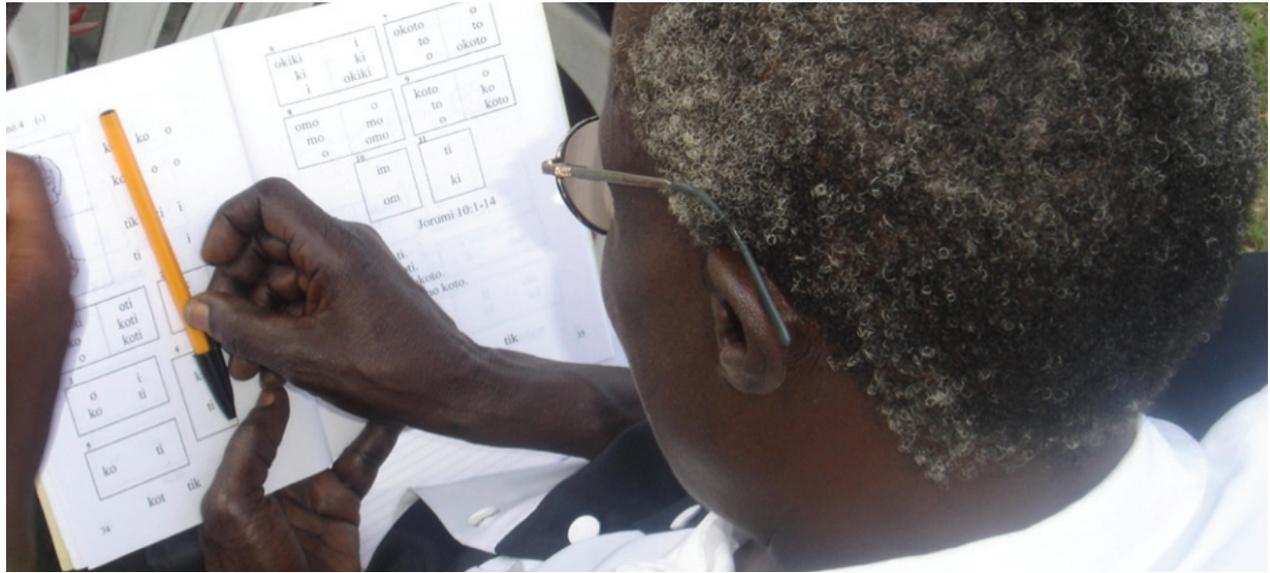
Your brother in Christ,  
Dr. Sid Rice



**DR. SID RICE**

**MEMBER NATION PARTNERS REPRESENT A GLOBAL NETWORK OF LITERACY & EVANGELISM ORGANIZATIONS.**

# LITERACY & EVANGELISM KENYA



*Using the Luo Primer of Kenya to learn to read the word “koti” (jacket)*

The story of L&E Kenya starts in the early years of 1970. A story is told of the dream of an American missionary who was also a veterinarian working among the Maasai. He longed to help this nomadic tribe keep healthy herds of cattle, as well as, to preach the Good News about Jesus. After a year or so of treating the cattle and distributing tracts, he realized his work would be much easier if the community he was working in could read. He shared his burden of helping the people learn to read with the local church leadership. The church leaders realized that a literate community would also help in their church planting and discipleship ministry. What started as an individual concern later received approval, and a group of Christian leaders came together to spearhead this work of making the Maasai community literate.

The challenge was how to do it? By this time, an organization by the name of Literacy & Evangelism International (LEI) had been formed in the USA. LEI's mission was to help people read the Bible. The founder of LEI, Reverend Dr. Robert Rice, was approached.

In July 1975, Literacy & Evangelism Inc. opened an office in Kenya. Three years later, on the 12th of September, 1978, an organization was registered in Kenya under the Societies Act. Literacy & Evangelism in East Africa (EA) was born. In 1993, L&E-EA changed from a society to a not-for-profit organization and was

renamed Literacy and Evangelism Fellowship of Kenya (LEFK). In 2007, the name changed again to Partners in Literacy Ministries (PALM) and early this year (2018) we became a Member Nation Partner of the LEI worldwide family. We are now known as Literacy and Evangelism Kenya (L&E Kenya).

Although we are a national organization, we have done work in Tanzania, Somaliland, Uganda, Burundi, Rwanda, Namibia, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Mauritius and South Sudan.

In Kenya, there are close to 50 different languages that are spoken. We have materials in Embu-Mbeere, Kalenjin, Dholuo, Kamba, Kikuyu, Meru, Kuria, Maasai, Orma, Pokoot, Swahili, Turkana, as well as English.

In 1994, we received a UNESCO Recognition Award for meritorious work in literacy within Kenya and Eastern Africa.

In the years 2002, 2004, 2005, 2006, L & E/PALM was voted by the Kenyan government as “The NGO with the best literacy programs” in the country.

L&E Kenya has gone through many name changes and transitions over the years, yet our focus remains the same. L&E Kenya exists to “equip the Church to share the message of Jesus Christ through the gift of reading.”

By Joseph Matheka, L&E Kenya

# ALFABETIZAÇÃO E EVANGELIZAÇÃO INTERNACIONAL

## AEI - BRAZIL

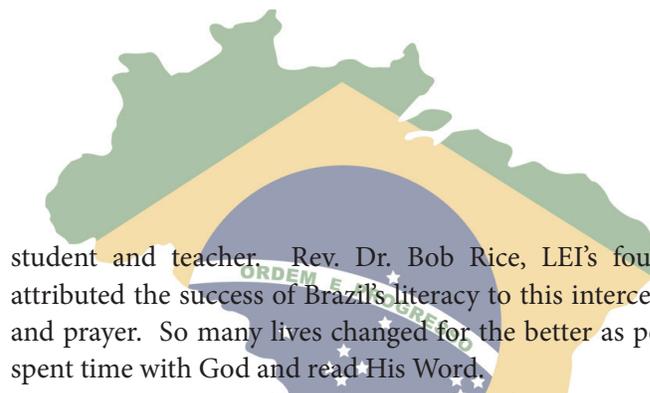


*AEI Brazil's Helsa de Almeida with Ana Biederman*

### **Adult Literacy Transforming the Whole Society** by Ana Biederman

As a school teacher and a vice-principal in Brazil, I started to notice patterns of “family illiteracy” in the lives of my students and community. I grew up in a small rural area where it was normal to be illiterate. Many started school but few graduated. Grandparents and parents lived their whole lives without reading. Many children left school to seek work and make money instead of spending their days in a classroom. It had been this way for generations. People found ways to survive being illiterate. Sometimes coping strategies were dangerous. Once, my mom and I visited a family whose mother was sick. No one in that family could read for the mother. My mom sorted the mother’s medicines into three different piles, according to the time to be taken: morning, afternoon, and night. Understanding how to take the medicines was so confusing and life-threatening for the mother who could not read.

After I came to know the Lord Jesus and the abundant life the Word of God brings to us, I saw reading in a new dimension. At school, as we visited a prison, and in everyday life, God started to bring people to me who could not read. I came to the conclusion that not just reading, but reading the Word of God changes lives, not just for this world but for the next as well. I had a burden in my heart, a call to help others learn to read. Then God introduced me to Literacy & Evangelism International (LEI) and one of LEI’s workers, Bob Biederman. That meeting changed my life! I came to the USA for LEI training and returned to Brazil with a vision to reach the whole country. It seemed impossible, but God opened the way by faith. After reading a devotion from Billy Graham, I decided to have one intercessor for each literacy



student and teacher. Rev. Dr. Bob Rice, LEI’s founder, attributed the success of Brazil’s literacy to this intercession and prayer. So many lives changed for the better as people spent time with God and read His Word.

An increasing need to train new teachers meant new coordinators were needed. There was so much work to do. I could not do it all alone. Volunteers helped me translate instruction books and advertise courses.

A special LEI worker, Rev. Bob Biederman, became my husband! Together we held the first LEI International Literacy Training Institute in Brazil. Twenty-six people were trained. Every year following, new coordinators and teachers multiplied. One of those first coordinators was Cilseia Belo Gudin, from São Paulo, who has worked with AEI Brazil for 20 plus years. She felt the LORD call her to literacy ministry, and she has been one of the most faithful workers, training people not only for Brazil, but for Africa, Latin America, and Asia as well.

One worker like Cilseia can change many lives. 93-year-old Mr. Jose wanted to read to sing at church. In the process he reconciled his life with God. Jaci accepted the LORD while studying Lesson 17 of an LEI Primer. Debora learned to read to sing in the choir, and now she always reads her Bible. Dijalma was going to lose his job due to illiteracy, but when he learned to read, he became the manager at the store. Lucia spent all her income unwisely, but after taking literacy classes she could manage the finances for the whole household. A gate man was going to be fired because he could not distribute the mail in a condominium complex. He learned to read and kept his job. Several students learned to read and were able to finish high school. Lives were changed in other countries where new coordinators were trained.

The Lord also opened doors for Brazilian literacy workers to go to Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Brazilian indigenous tribal areas. Literacy transforms whole families, breaking cycles of illiteracy. There are many challenges in literacy evangelism ministry, but the victories are greater than anyone can imagine!

*We praise God and give Him the glory for all that has been accomplished by AEI Brazil since its inception 24 years ago.*

# MEET THE MEMBER NATION PARTNERS



**AEI Brazil** (Alfabetização e Evangelização Internacional) with team mates Melise D'Agostini, Nilza Nonato, Helsa Almeida, and Cilseia Gudin, has trained hundreds of teachers in Brazil and has sent literacy and ESL missionaries to other countries around the world.

**L&E Benin/Togo** is led by Daniel Awolou from Benin and David Nabine from Togo. Formed in 2015, they work extensively throughout Benin, Togo, and other countries, developing primers, conducting teacher trainings and establishing French language ministries.



**L&E Ghana** is the team of Rev. Samuel Lawerteh, Nat Nunoo, Helena Amoako Kesse, Joseph McCarthy, and Ellen Akonor. The L&E Ghana team has successfully completed numerous primer constructions in Ghana and has assisted with primers in Nigeria. L&E Ghana successfully hosted a regional literacy training institute in the fall of 2017 and hosted the Member Nation Partners gathering in the fall of 2018.



**L&E Kenya** is comprised of Joseph Matheka, Patrick Malasi, and Gideon Kiongo and was established in 1978. Since that time L&E Kenya has been prolific in developing materials and training teachers throughout Kenya and neighboring countries.



**L&E Malawi** is comprised of Rev. Maxwell Mpitanyanga, Chancy Gondwe, and Wales Sawali. These minister in Malawi, Mozambique, and other nearby countries. Additionally, they are active in leading a prison literacy ministry in Malawi.



**L&E Nigeria** is led by Rev. Titus Turaki. Rev. Musa Waziri, Silas Phanuel, Yohanna Geji, and others join Titus in teaching, training, and developing and printing both local language and English language materials.



**LEI Canada** is led by Rev. Carey Jo Johnston and is based in the Toronto metropolitan area. This ministry became registered as a charity in 2008 and became a Member Nation Partner in 2016. Rev. Johnston has served with LEI for many years and is the Primer Construction Director for LEI USA.



**LEI USA** is led by the Rev. Dr. Sid Rice and is based in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The ministry was started in 1967 by the Rev. Dr. Bob Rice and has been the premier organization in the literacy evangelism initiative and methodology for the past 50 plus years.



# FIRST-EVER MEMBER NATION PARTNERS GATHERING - GHANA, AFRICA



In 2012, the Literacy & Evangelism International Ministry Directors Team began discussing how to better support overseas missionaries, most of whom were native to the countries in which they served. A task force was formed and several years were spent praying, researching, discussing and thinking about how to better serve and encourage these missionaries. One of the main directives to come out of the task force was the creation of a new type of partnership: Member Nation Partners. In essence, these partners bear the L&E name, logo, and mission, but they are specific to a particular country. These Partners are responsible for developing their own organization, governing board, and financial funding.

LEI implemented an application process for Member Nation Partners. Currently, there are eight official partners: Benin/Togo, Brazil, Canada, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, and USA.

## WHAT IS A MEMBER NATION PARTNER?

A Member Nation Partner is:

- \*Literacy & Evangelism (L&E) incorporated in a given country. Such a partner uses the name Literacy and Evangelism (L&E) with the country's name (or translated equivalent).

- \*an organization doing literacy and/or ESL ministry aligned with Literacy & Evangelism's mission statement, wishing to be connected to a global network of ministries doing similar work.

- \*has an independent local board.

- \*uses LEI's mission statement or culturally approved adaptation consistent with the spirit of LEI's mission statement:

*Literacy & Evangelism International equips the Church to share the message of Jesus Christ through the gift of reading.*

*We develop Bible-content materials to teach basic reading in local languages and conversational English.*

*We train church leaders and missionaries to use LEI materials for evangelism, discipleship and church planting.*

Because of a generous donation by the Dr. Ed and Mrs. Mary Jane Jenkins Memorial, Literacy & Evangelism International was able to conduct its first-ever Member Nation Partners Gathering, co-hosted with L&E Ghana, in Africa, September 2018. The primary goal of this gathering was to give opportunity for members to share and to celebrate achievements of each Member Nation Partner. During the business sessions, success stories were shared; best practices were highlighted; funding and ministry challenges, solutions, and opportunities were addressed; an introduction to the use of storytelling and photography was presented; and updates on LEI's Online trainings and courses were shared. The importance of worldwide literacy evangelism and strategic initiatives was discussed. Also on the agenda were strategic planning, consistency and contextualization of LEI methodologies, and casting vision for the future.

The gracious hospitality of L&E Ghana provided for a bounty of good food, fellowship, and fun, which added to the enjoyment of the business meetings. Participants said that the Member Nation Partners Gathering exceeded all expectations and was a blessing to all who attended. Many words of appreciation are extended to the Jenkins family for funding, L&E Ghana for hosting, and LEI USA for initiating this significant event. To God be the glory!

# PLEASE PRAY:

*“I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”*

PHILIPPIANS 1:3-6 (NIV)

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| MON   | For Africa Member Nation Partners and other LEI Missionaries: L&E Benin/Togo; L&E Kenya; L&E Ghana; L&E Malawi; L&E Nigeria; Pat Lindsay; Martin & Esther Ntahonkiriye; and Sila & Marthe Nzongo.                    |
| TUES  | For future Asia Member Nation Partners and current Missionaries: Dr. Nam-Hyeon Kim; Gamaliel & Gloria Kim; John Yoon & Ellen Yoo; Chrystella Wälchli; and Gyan Mochary.  |
| WED   | For Latin America Member Nation Partners and Missionaries: AEI Brazil; Tedd & Emily Lodes; Jerry & Kathy Manus; Augusto & Carolyn Pecho; Bruce & Jaye Hansen; and Ivan & Claire Rosalia.                             |
| THURS | For North America Member Nation Partners and Missionaries: LEI Canada; the Biedermans; Don Edic; Melina Gallo; Kenyon Gerbrandt; James Kigamwa; the Lovekins; the Mulloys; the Rices and Tulsa volunteers and staff. |
| FRI   | For future Europe Member Nation Partners and current Missionaries: Georg & Martha Ort.   |
| SAT   | That new learners would be willing and determined to learn to read, so they can read God’s Word.   |
| SUN   | That new Literacy & Evangelism Member Nation Partners and Missionaries will step forward and be inspired to share the message of Jesus Christ through the gift of literacy.  |

## INTERNATIONAL LITERACY TRAINING INSTITUTE 2019

Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA

June 8-28, 2019 (3 weeks of two tracks)

For more detailed information about Literacy Trainings and Digital Resources, please see our website.

<https://www.literacyevangelism.org/get-involved/training>

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Would your church like someone to make a mission presentation?

Please contact our President: [SidRice@LiteracyInternational.net](mailto:SidRice@LiteracyInternational.net)



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